

third period (don't be home for Christmas) by lymricks

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: (He Gets One), Implied/Referenced Child Abuse, M/M, billy needs a hug

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-12-21

Updated: 2017-12-21

Packaged: 2022-04-03 14:55:59

Rating: Mature

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 2,399

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

“Happy last day, everyone,” Aaron adds. His grin turns a little dirty then. “Hargrove, hey man. I bet you’re thrilled for a little more free time.”

Steve perks up, turning to see where Billy is, ready to ask him what his *problem* was this morning, but he freezes when he sees the look on Billy’s face.

third period (don't be home for Christmas)

Author's Note:

Just a stupid little holiday-ish one shot where Billy is hurting and angry because stuff is hard and Steve is learning to be there to help.

They meet in the parking lot before school.

It's become something of a ritual. Most days so far this month have started the same. Steve to school early, Billy leaning up against the camaro, shoulders hunched against the cold, a cigarette hanging from his lips.

Steve jumps out of his car, regrets it the instant the cold hits his skin, and wanders over. He leans up against the car next to Billy, leaves a little space between them, not quite touching. "Hey," Steve says.

"Hi," Billy answers.

"Happy last day," Steve says, grinning. He can't help it, even though the smile is probably too big before this early in the morning. He feels lighter than he has in weeks. The promise of vacation, of sleeping in tomorrow, of lazy hours spent babysitting, or wandering the quarry taking big sips of expensive alcohol pilfered from the Harrington home is the best prospect for calm that Steve has had since Halloween. It'll be a chance to hold still. "I am so ready for vacation," he adds when Billy doesn't say anything.

Billy drops the cigarette and grinds it under his heel. "*Fuck you*, Harrington," he says, mean and nasty and low.

Steve blinks. "What?" he asks, and he's reaching for Billy's shoulder because Billy's turning away from him. Billy ducks his hand. "Hey," Steve says, confused, "Billy wait--"

Billy doesn't answer, just walks across the parking lot. The school door slams against the wall he yanks it open so hard, and the bang of the metal handle on the brick of the building echoes. Steve stands,

leaning against the Camaro alone for another five confused minutes before he finally goes inside.

By second period, when Steve walks into the library where he and Billy usually huddle together and Billy is nowhere to be found, Steve figures out that Billy's actively avoiding him. He spends twenty minutes, feeling increasingly annoyed, but also nervous and not really sure why, looking for him. There's no sign of Billy anywhere in the building though, and eventually Steve gives up, wanders back to the library and spends the rest of the period bouncing his knee and staring at the wall.

At the end of second period, the bell sounds, shrill, and it startles Steve into motion. He gathers his stuff and misses Billy, which is--kind of weird, actually. They've been hanging out a lot more since--everything. Steve's gotten used to Billy, his sense of humor and his loud music, the way he's always kind of brushing up against Steve, little touches that make heat pool in Steve's stomach. Steve doesn't really get what's going on with that, but it's not a bad feeling. It's almost addicting. He finds himself looking for reasons for Billy to touch him.

He stumbles often in the hallways these days that a concerned Nancy had cornered him two days ago. She'd asked him if he was drinking in school. Steve said sometimes, because it felt easier than explaining that when he trips Billy curls his fingers around Steve's elbow, that Steve can feel the warm press of his fingers through his sweater, that Billy's grip is strong and reassuring, that he holds Steve up.

Except now Steve can't find him, and he's going to be late for third period because he stopped moving to think about the way Billy presses up against him, closer than he should, shirtless and always too warm in basketball practice. How sometimes Steve loses the ball to him on purpose, just because when Billy thinks he's getting a win--getting one up on Steve--he presses closer, almost hooks his chin over Steve's shoulder, and Steve can imagine what it would feel like to lean back the rest of the way, to curve against Billy's chest, to press his ass against--

Steve swallows hard, shakes himself a little, and walks half in a daze from the library toward English class. It's his least favorite class of

the day, but it's the last day before break and he's hedging his bets. If he's late, probably the teacher won't care enough to keep him for a detention.

"Merry Christmas, Steve," Aaron--from the basketball team--calls out to him. Steve lifts his hand in an acknowledgement. "Happy last day, everyone," Aaron adds. His grin turns a little dirty then. "Hargrove, hey man. I bet you're thrilled for a little more free time."

Steve perks up, turning to see where Billy is, ready to ask him what his *problem* was this morning, but he freezes when he sees the look on Billy's face.

Billy stalks forward, pushes a hand into Aaron's chest and slams him into a locker. The entire hallway goes completely silent.

Billy gets in the kids face, then, and Steve can't hear what he's growling, but he can see the way Billy pulls his arm back, the tension in his shoulders like he's winding up for a hit. Steve unfreezes. He drops his books, already moving forward, can't even hear the sound they make when they hit the ground over the rushing in his ears. "Billy," he's saying, and Billy isn't reacting, so Steve crosses the hallway, curls his fingers around Billy's wrist, *yanks* him back against his chest. Billy fights for a second, thrashing against him. Steve tightens his hold.

Everyone in the hallway is staring. Steve is pretty sure it's that, more than whatever Steve is whispering to Billy, his half frantic, "Hey, it's ok, what the fuck, I've got you man, it's ok, ow, fuck, Billy hold still. *I've got you*," that makes Billy still in Steve's grip. Steve starts to let go and Billy rips himself away, storms down the hallway, slamming doors and lockers shut as he goes. The sounds echo in the stunned silence.

"What the fuck was that?" Aaron asks finally, smoothing over his sweater. "I should fucking kick his ass. What the fuck was that?" he's looking around at everyone and no one answers.

"No one cares, Aaron," Steve says, still staring at the spot where Billy disappeared around the corner. He leaves his books on the floor where he left them, all thoughts of going to third period abandoned.

He's definitely going to end up with a detention. Steve can't bring himself to care.

He's just turning the corner when the noise in the hallway starts up again, when he hears a teacher ask whose books those are, ask why no one is in class yet. He picks up his pace, doesn't want to get caught.

Needs to find Billy.

~

Steve checks everywhere he can think of: the library, the classrooms he knows are empty, the locker room, the bathroom. He even ducks out a side door and creeps up to the Camaro, peers in the windows to see if Billy's there. He isn't. It takes Steve longer than he'd like to admit to figure out how to sneak back into the school. He always forgets to prop the fucking door. Nancy has to remind him every time.

He's wandering back through the gym, starting a half-formed plan to check the locker rooms again, when he sees movement out of the corner of his eyes. Steve drifts toward it, slips behind the folded tables that will be put out later for some sort of after school parent thing. He finds Billy behind them, in a dark little corner, standing hunched against the wall, his head hanging between his shoulders and his hands fisted in his hair.

Steve slows to a stop. Hesitates. He wasn't expecting--this. Billy looks--Billy looks delicate--leaned against the wall like that. Steve thinks for a second about leaving, about giving Billy the privacy he's clearly searching out. He starts to back away.

He kicks a corner of a table by accident, though, and it echoes in gym. Billy looks up sharply, already pulling his lips back into a sneer. His eyes though, are shining and a little glassy, his cheeks red, his breathing too quick. "Didn't I already tell you to fuck off?" Billy asks. His face twists into something mean. "Want me to write it down for you, pretty boy? I know you're not a great student."

That stings, but Steve also knows that it's supposed to. He rolls his

shoulders, clenches then unclenches his fists. He shakes it off. Billy's so tense, Steve realizes, curled up into himself like he doesn't want to take up too much room.

Steve takes a hesitant step forward, then a more confident one, then another. His heart is thumping in his chest, but he closes the distance between them and sinks against the wall next to Billy. They aren't quite touching. Steve can feel the inch he's left between their shoulders like it's tangible.

"What's up?" he asks, because it's an open ended question and seems like a good place to start.

"Jesus, Harrington," Billy snaps, "What part of get the fuck away from me don't you understand?"

"Billy," Steve says, feeling a little helpless. "Be happy, man. It's the last day of school. We're about to be on vacation. We can sleep in. We don't have to *come to school for days*."

"And what fucking part," Billy growls, but his voice cracks, and he has to pause, suck in a heavy breath, and Steve can hear something desperate, something adjacent to a sob rattle in Billy's chest, "Of days at home do you think I'm going to *enjoy*?"

Steve feels sick all of the sudden, like he's going to throw up all over the gym floor. He has--he has nothing to say to that, he realizes. He feels hollow and empty and horrified and--and it's a lot for him to feel, so he thinks about Billy, about Billy staring down the prospect of long days at home with his dad, who might not even have work for some of them, fuck. And Steve feels sick and he wants so badly to do something, but he doesn't know what he could do.

"*Fuck*," Billy says, ragged, and Steve turns to really look at him. Billy's face collapses, just crumples. He shuts his eyes and Steve can see wet tracks down his cheeks.

"Billy," Steve whispers, and he's reaching for Billy before he really knows what he's doing. Billy likes to touch him, Steve knows, likes to press too close to him in practice, likes to curl his fingers around Steve's elbow and hold him up when he falls--

So Steve reaches out, thinking that this is a little bit like falling, thinking that maybe he can hold Billy up.

He press his fingers to Billy's jaw, turns Billy so that he's looking at Steve, shifts his weight so that they're facing each other. There's inches between them, Steve's never been more aware of the little bit of height he has on Billy than he is now, when Billy cuts his gaze up to look at Steve through his eyelashes.

Steve's breath catches in his throat. He stands there, fingers curled against Billy's jaw, can feel the heat radiating from Billy's body, can see, all of the sudden, nothing but the part of Billy's lips, how fucking red they are.

Suddenly they're closer together, their noses almost touching, and Steve thinks *no*, but also *yes*, and Billy's looking at him with those stupid blue eyes, and Steve forgets sometimes that Billy's young, actually, because he doesn't act it, but he looks young now. His eyes look young. "Harrington," Billy says, and it sounds a little bit like *please*.

"Yeah," Steve says, and then he slides his fingers into Billy's hair, tips his head back, kisses him.

Billy collapses again, presses into Steve like the distance between them is too much to bare, runs his hand over Steve's side, down his back, grips at his hips like he can't figure out where to touch Steve to bring him closer. It's sloppy, and desperate, and the angle isn't what Steve wants it to be, but he can barely pull back to suck in a breath of air, can't stand the space between them either.

When the kiss finally breaks, Billy won't look at him. He drops his head against Steve's shoulder and fists his hands in Steve's t-shirt, won't let Steve step back. Steve isn't sure what to do, here, isn't sure what to say or how to react. So he stands there, lets Billy clutch and cling, holds him up.

He closes his own eyes, slides his hands around Billy, presses his hands up under Billy's shirt, rubs his thumbs in slow circles against the warm skin at the small of Billy's back. "I didn't think," Steve says, just holding him, half afraid Billy is going to jerk away, or that

someone is going to pop out, and then this will be it, the end of Steve's actual life probably, but Billy doesn't pull away, doesn't say a single fucking thing. So Steve says, "I have to babysit this week," and Billy goes absolutely still against him. "Bring--bring Max?" Steve asks, "And you can come. Then you don't have to be--with--with your dad. As much?"

There's a long pause and Steve is pretty sure that this is fucking it, Billy's going to murder him, maybe, but then he feels Billy's chin dig into his shoulder, once, twice, three times.

Billy's nodding. Steve breathes out slowly.

"Ok," Steve says, pulling Billy in closer. "Ok."

~

It's the last day of school before vacation. Steve *still* gets a fucking detention for skipping third period. He doesn't really mind, though, because when he walks out to his car, Billy's waiting, leaning against the Camaro with a cigarette hanging from his lips just like he'd been that morning.

"Didn't you have a detention?" Steve asks.

"I skipped it," Billy says with a shrug. Steve thinks that's the funniest thing he's maybe ever heard, doesn't really get why, trips over his own feet laughing. Billy's fingers curl around his elbow, warm and reassuring.

When Steve straightens up, they stand there together like that in the parking lot with Billy's hand wrapped around Steve's arm, just above his elbow. Steve can feel the warmth of him, they're standing so close. They stand there like that for long enough that it should be weird, but it isn't.

Several long heartbeats pass before Billy lets go.

Author's Note:

I'm lymricks on tumblr too :)